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### Meaningful looks

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**Propositions accompanying the Ph.D. thesis**  
*Stellingen behorende bij het proefschrift*

**Meaningful Looks: The Transformation, Function, and Meaning of Visual Style  
in Contemporary Indonesian Film**

Ari Purnama

1. Because so far Indonesian film has been regarded primarily as a significant social phenomenon but not as an artistic field or artform, there is a paucity of aesthetic inquiry in the field. It is therefore imperative to examine Indonesian film from an aesthetic viewpoint to fill that gap of knowledge and advance the study of Indonesian cinema.
2. The visual stylistic transformation of Indonesian film in the post-Suharto era has been driven primarily by the filmmakers' reinvigoration of three stylistic devices belonging to the domains of cinematography and mise en scène: *lighting*, *production design*, and *the mobile frame*.
3. The key stylistic devices that transform the looks of contemporary Indonesian film (lighting, production design, and the mobile frame) did not appear suddenly in the post-Suharto era. However, before the 2000s, these techniques were underutilized due to many factors. It is in the post-Suharto era that filmmakers have been able to *leverage* these techniques and reinvigorate their forms and functions, thereby making them much more salient.
4. The role of visual style in contemporary Indonesian cinema is complex as it engages in denotative, expressive, symbolic, decorative, suggestive, reflexive, and local-regional culture-specifying functions.
5. Visual stylistic transformation in post-Suharto cinema has been enabled by a number of key factors, including: technological development in filmmaking; the filmmakers' educational and artistic backgrounds; the reorganization of the film profession; the fluidity of creative workers in the Indonesian film ecosystem; and the influence of stylistic developments in contemporary transnational cinema.
6. The larger significance of visual style in the contemporary Indonesian film ecosystem resides in the fact that it provides a creative outlet for filmmakers to represent the diverse local and regional cultures within Indonesia that have long been repressed and underrepresented during the Suharto era.
7. Examining visual style in Indonesian cinema reveals further insights into the culture at large. Visual style puts on display the various dimensions of human experience, which entails the delineation of the specific cultural traits of Indonesia.
8. Stylistic analysis cannot be divorced from interpretation.
9. Indonesian and Dutch cinema cultures have parallels, among which is that they are "overloaded with self-doubt," to cite Ernest Mathijs' words in *The Cinema of the Low Countries* (2004, p. 1).
10. The current model of higher education is not sustainable. We need to move from a 'box-ticking'-oriented education to a 'well-being focused' education.